

I would have loved to be there with all of you and meet many friendly in person. Unluckily the consequences of the fall I had last September are very serious and I cannot travel.

Times are not easy: the Covid pandemic has proved more difficult than expected with continuous mutations, the climate crisis is causing extreme effects in various parts of the world, the terrible war of aggression in Ukraine puts the safety of many, too many people at risk, the rekindling of inflation is having a dramatic impact on the poorest, most fragile and excluded.

When we thought about the title of this Conference a year ago, we didn't think we had to face this dramatic situation, but we were well aware of the urgent need to take concrete actions to reduce poverty in its various forms, bearing in mind the strong link between peace and poverty, between peace and the search for new relationships between the environment, society, cultures, institutions, economics and politics for the pursuit of a development model capable of taking care of people and reduce poverty . Integral ecology cannot be separated from peace.

At the audience granted to the participants in the Conference on the Global Educational Pact on 1 June 2022, the Holy Father affirmed that the crisis must be an "opportune moment that provokes to take new paths" and again "This time of ours, in which technicality and consumerism tends to make us users and consumers, the crisis can become a propitious moment to evangelize once again the sense of man, of life, of the world; to recover the centrality of the person as the creature who in Christ is the image and likeness of the Creator. "

This is the goal of our International Conference, to find new ways to reduce poverty, not through short-term forms of assistance, but structural, permanent, inherent in the same model of development. We have always been convinced that the well-being of humanity does not depend only on growth but on true educational, social and economic progress capable of defeating poverty by developing a fairer, more just, inclusive and environmentally friendly economy.

The Holy Father Pope Francis, in the audience granted in May 2016 to the participants in the International Conference of the FCAPP, invited the Foundation to contribute to generating new models of economic progress more clearly directed to the universal common good, inclusion and integral development, the creation of work and investment in human resources .

This has been our main focus ever since.

It is a challenging task that we have sought and are trying to achieve through in-depth studies, dialogue with world-renowned experts, discussions with companies, the world of finance and institutions.

Starting from 2021 we have activated a series of webinars, which we have called “one to many” to highlight the experiences of people who have applied the principles of the CSD in their entrepreneurial or institutional activity.

From all our analyzes it has emerged with great evidence that to reduce poverty it is essential to create an inclusive economy, but how? It is one of the many questions that we will try to answer during this IC.

The Holy Father teaches us that the main reason for changing things is that the current growth model is based on a sick economy and that we cannot live healthy in a sick economy. We need to make a radical change of heart (feelings), mind (thoughts), sense (responsibility) and action (behaviors) to ensure the lasting well-being of all and protect creation. It is necessary, says Pope Francis, to move from an economy built on selfishness, exclusion, short vision and wars to one built on solidarity, inclusion, long vision and peace.

We have to break the worrying vicious circle in place: widespread low income and precarious jobs determine a low quality of education, difficulties in accessing health care, reduced life expectancy, marginalization which in turn reduce the chances of enjoying decent incomes.

More and more people, businesses, institutions, academics and politicians are showing awareness of the urgent need to change the model but concrete actions are still limited. Economics and finance do not yet act as a whole and in a harmonious way at the service of people and of the mother earth, even if the situation is very varied at the level of countries and single organizations.

In concrete terms, inclusive economic growth **means allowing all people of every social class, race, gender, religion and every type of business to take an active part in economic life and to enjoy its fruits.**

This definition includes two fundamental aspects: broad **sharing of the benefits** of growth and the participation of all in **building the growth process**. Sharing and participation are two cardinal principles of the CSD.

Inclusive growth can also serve to curb the growing disaffection in politics, strengthen trust in governments and in the social contract and hence democracy and peace. How much we need to invest in peace and social brotherhood.

A fundamental step is to eliminate existing disadvantages: strengthen the participation of young people and women in the labor market by modernizing it and aiming for higher levels of employment, modernizing and making health services accessible to all sections of the population in all countries, activating new educational-training models and expanding social protection systems to help all citizens, without exception, to improve their situation and prepare for change.

We know that all this requires a lot of creativity, commitment and a sense of responsibility at all levels to activate integrally sustainable, open, ethical and fair innovations.

It is necessary to identify and apply new measures to evaluate progress: no longer and not just the quantity and growth of GDP and short-term or very short-term returns, but the evaluation of the quality of life and the quantity of people leaving the situation of poverty and get decent work.

This is the hope expressed by Pope Francis in the message addressed to the participants in the event “Preparing the future: building a regenerative, inclusive and sustainable economy” which was held on 12.1.2022 in Rome, Palazzo Lateranense.

The International Conference is placed in this complex and uncertain context which, as you will have seen from the program, is divided into four sections.

In the first session we will try to learn more about the situation of poverty in its various forms, identify its determinants and the connection with the current model of growth, understand what can be done to reduce poverty and prevent families and poorer people from being so exposed to the new health, social and economic risks and the devastating effects of wars.

Poverty cannot be reduced without the convinced action of businesses and finance. In the 2nd session we will hear their voice; unluckily due to new commitment we will not be able to hear the voice of a representative of the workers' unions.

Businesses are the engine of change and job creators. They can do a lot by reorienting their strategic objectives, production processes, logistics, human resource management, organization and all their activities to pursue a just profit, people's well-being and care for the planet together.

There are many new forms of poverty, sometimes still unknown, also linked to the new forms of work that have developed in the last decade: precarious work, raiders, undeclared work, etc. which in fact do not guarantee decent work. Is it time to ask ourselves what is the meaning of work in a technologically advanced context? Pure performance or relationship? Pure economic contract or relationship of mutual benefit and growth? For young people the relational aspect and personal growth prevails, we must take this into account.

We must recognize that the growth of poverty that we are seeing dramatically, after a period of reduction, has pushed some companies and banks, I know some Italians, to deepen their social role and to overcome the concept of sustainability by aiming at that of regeneration. A number of companies and banks have activated changes in their business model, have adopted ESG criteria and inclusive policies, have become benefit companies. These companies perform well and are appreciated by the markets and investors. Jeffrey Sachs, who will hold the key-note speech of the II Session in connection from the USA, chairs, together with Andrea Illy, the Regenerative Society Foundation which promotes a new model that reuses resources, does not produce residues that accumulate in the environment and regenerates the biosphere with the challenging goal of pursuing the well-being of all humanity.

In the third session we will hear the voice of Europe, governments and institutions to understand the concrete actions that these bodies have or are in the process of taking to promote the reduction of inequalities and poverty also through the pursuit of a peace not based on fear and strength.

Among these actions there is the need for a new method for calculating national and international well-being. GDP is no longer useful if we want to achieve an inclusive economy and therefore a fully sustainable development.

I like to remember that with the "Opportunities for all: A Framework for Policy Action on Inclusive growth" project, the OECD has developed a package of 24 inclusive growth indicators to monitor the progress recorded by individual states. It is a very interesting project. The OECD, among other things, has abandoned the "grow first, distribute then" approach because "equality must be considered from the outset, when governments design growth policies rather than address their effects through redistribution ". It is an innovative ex-ante approach that helps people, businesses and regions realize their potential and drive growth by aligning national and international policies to the best practices through the possibility of comparing them.

The fourth session is dedicated to young people, we will hear their vision of how the world of tomorrow should be and how they propose to achieve it.

Poverty can also be reduced through new educational models, different methods and contents of communication, the reduction of gender inequalities. In the current IC we will not deal with them specifically because these aspects have already been discussed in our other initiatives.

One consideration: the complex era we are living requires a great effort on the part of citizens who were called to understand and apply even heavy political choices and to adopt behaviors relevant to their freedom. In this learning process the role of communication is essential in involving citizens, providing correct information, helping them to better understand the reasons for the various measures and making political action more acceptable and participatory.

The Holy Father in his speech at the aforementioned conference "Preparing the future" reiterated that "*what happens depends on our commitment*". That we are all architects of our future and that we can make a difference. Pope Francis added: "*How I would like everyone to accept the responsibility of preparing a different future!*"

Our CI intends to respond to this call: to take responsibility for preparing a better future thanks to the contribution of knowledge, skills and experiences of personalities who play roles of responsibility in various fields.

I thank all the speakers, panelists, moderators who honor us with their presence . In particular I would like to thank their Eminences . Card. Ravasi , Card. Hollerich , card. Parolin, who will hold his speech tomorrow, the commissioner Suica Dubravka and Prof. Enrico Giovannini, the Italian Minister of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility.

The word to prof. Marseguerra, coordinator of the Scientific Committee of the Foundation.

